

## Contributions

### UNISON

S. B. GRISSE

It is the unison of the various tributaries, that form our great rivers, lakes, etc. It is the working in unison with each other of the natural laws that causes the giant oak to tower heavenward. It is the working of the various congregations in our beloved brotherhood, in unison with each other that in time to come, and that is not in the far distance, that will show the power of the Brethren church. As far as my observations are able to reach there seems to be an increased interest in the welfare of each other. Our college, our publishing house, our young people's work, our Sunday-schools, in each of these departments there is a marked advance over a few years ago. In the publishing department and in the college interests especially does there seem to be an enthusiastic awakening. To what cause shall we assign the reason. We are ready to attribute it to the consecrated men and women of our fraternity. To me, there seems to be a general awakening along the line. Prejudice is decreasing. Selfishness is being buried. The needs of a common brotherhood are being felt more and more. They are coming before our eyes more prominent each day. While we see a little friction here and there occasionally, it is not of that kind of friction that destroys but that friction which produces electricity and sends its current from heart to heart and soul to soul.

The "entering wedge" is no longer heard from, we suppose some one has hit it a blow and has caused it to fly out and be lost in love. In this part of the state we have had a few days of gloomy weather; but now the bright sun has again made her appearance, dispelling the gloom, and bringing sunshine instead of shadow. The protracted season is at hand and already comes with its messages of joy over the repentance of lost humanity. The angels of heaven have sounded their chimes of praise over the return of prodigal children. We are come to the knowledge that cross bearing is a personal matter, and yet a sharer of each others' burdens.

Religion is more than a negative, yes, more than a crucifixion of self and the world. It has a positive side as well; it calls for action, for endurance, for heroic effort, for fellowship of purpose and life, and still more, even suffering in the Master's vineyard. No man can follow Christ and find no cross to carry. The apostles and early disciples found crosses and not a few. Some of which were shame, enduring hardships, suffering for evil doers, contending "for the faith," even to martyrdom. We believe it will be so in every age; and amid all this there was harmony of thought, and of practice. May it be so to the end of time. "Take up thy cross," not anothers. Every brother and every sister has their own cross to bear, and brother A or B cannot carry it for him.

Again, he cannot go around it, or climb over it. God will put it in his path and he must bear it, "take" it up, or his salvation will be a failure. He must take it and bear it before the world as a valiant soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ. May we add, cross bearing to the flesh is not pleasant but burdensome, but is it so to the true child of God? No cross, and there is sure to be no death to sin. No cross, no fellowship with Christ's suffering, hence no share in his glory. "Take my cross and follow me," wheresoever I lead, into whatsoever service, or danger, or trial, or sacrifice. "Gird thyself and follow me" and "Lo I am with you even to the end of the world."

Bryan, O.

### AND THEN?

EMILY BEATRICE GNAGEY

In a little book called "Gold Dust," which has been translated from the French and which contains thoughts on the most precious truths of life, there is this story:

"Mother," said a child one day, "since nothing is ever lost what becomes of our thoughts?"

"Our thoughts," replied his mother, "go to God who remembers them forever."

"Forever," repeated the child, creeping closer; "Mother, I am frightened."

It is only a story, sweet and simple; but I find in it far-reaching thought and a universal truth. There are deeds; there are words; there are thoughts. These three make our being. Thought, using the word in its finest sense, is *what we are*. Words and deeds are thoughts materialized. And our thoughts God remembers forever. Which of us is not also frightened by this reflection? We think, we speak or we act. And then—our conduct has become a part of us—it is making us for glory or for shame—it has become a current in the great sea of human action. A harp string has been touched and a cord vibrates in the universe of God. Would we take this truth more deeply to heart, our very meditations would be made the holiest and highest. Many times the trivial things of life prove to be the most significant. Matters of how great concern to the world often are seen to hinge upon the faithful performance of little duties. In the ship-yards of a great nation a vessel was being built. Some one might have blundered in laying the keel, or in hoisting the rigging or in arming the ship, and it might not have mattered. The ship might never have come into action. But suppose some workman would have been unfaithful, suppose the ship, because of some flaw, would not have been able to stand the test: and then,—Ah, then the world would never have gazed with admiration on an unparalleled tour of the seas; America would never have been thrilled by one of the most marvelous of all naval feats, and on the golden page of history there would not stand as an inspiration and a blessing the matchless race of the Oregon.

But while there is something frightful in this theme, there is also something encour-

aging, even comforting. The thought that every yearning for good, every sacrifice, and every noble act shall some time receive a recompense as an inspiration to right living. Each one of us is the rightful heir to rich experiences that can only be felt:—the innocent beam on a child's face; the joyous sunshine on the face of some happy-hearted boy or girl, that tells the beauty of youth; the calm, worn face of some gray-haired pilgrim that tells he has conquered in the battle of life; the friendly smiles and warm hand-clasps; the kind words and the thousand little acts that constantly encourage us; is there not a Hand that records all these? Our thoughts, the inexpressable longings of the inner life, which, if we could know, we would know each other. For a sensitive soul cannot reveal its sublimity thru this house of clay. What is the goal of these nameless desires for the highest in the soul of man? Do they die in the heart that conceived them? Ah, no! Their destiny is in eternity. They go to God who remembers them forever.

In the old mountain town where I lived when a child, I used to go out and watch the sunset almost every evening. As the shadows gathered, the great gray mountains seemed to draw closer around us and the sun sank slowly behind the hills as if lingering to say a long farewell to the little world it had brightened during the day. Perhaps there is a glory in the sunsets among those ancient hills found there alone, perhaps it was because of my youthful imagination or my childish responsiveness; but there was something in those sunsets that no others have ever had. In my joyous ecstasy my admiration became selfish and I forgot that the sun ever set save behind "Saylor Hill." Words cannot picture the gorgeous hues with which the sky was painted. Some angel-artist must have poured an extravagance of crimson and purple and gray and gold into the western sky. But I wish to speak of a sunset grander than any the Laurel Ridge or Alleghany Mountains were ever responsible for,—the sunset of a godly life. To be where some saintly soul is just passing from this world to a brighter and less checkered one must be an experience far more glorious than to gaze into a myriad dazzling sunsets. Such an experience, apart from its bringing one to the very border of the spirit world, would impress one with the grandeur of life. As the after glow of the departed sun lingers long about the hilly horizon, so the glory of a good life lingers here forever and uplifts human hearts.

Let us greet life with courageous hearts. It is worth living. The evil stalks the world, it is finite in its essence and must end in self-consumption. Somewhere all wrongs shall be righted; somewhere fond hopes shall be no longer hindered; somewhere our disappointed ambitions shall all be crowned; somewhere life will be all love, and forever. Live nobly, and then? "But eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him;" and you